

GRAMMARS OF LIGHT

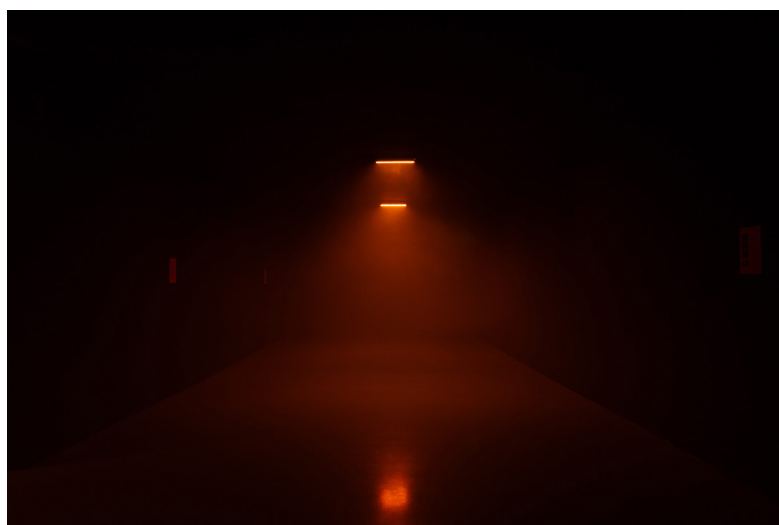


CERITH WYN EVANS
ANN LISLEGAARD
P. STAFF

February 6–May 10, 2026

Press preview:

Thursday, February 5, 12–14 h



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Astrup Fearnley Museet presents *Grammars of Light*, a major exhibition featuring the work of Cerith Wyn Evans, Ann Lislegaard, and P. Staff. Their immersive environments, architecturally scaled video projections, and luminous sculptures—fashioned from repurposed consumer, medical, and industrial lighting—transform the museum's galleries and stimulate the senses. Perception is impacted in unexpected ways, and essential questions are raised about how we see the world as a thinking, feeling body.

Many of the works dynamically respond to the surrounding architecture: light columns are duplicated in the museum's glass ceiling, crystalline forms in an animation envelop a modernist building, and holographic fans form a corridor of intense luminosity, flashing poetic texts. Instead of illustrating a principle or providing simple answers, we are pulled into affecting scenarios that open space for the unknown and blur the distinctions between interior and exterior, and the body and its environment.

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The representation of natural light through illusion, particularly in painting, has been an enduring concern for the visual arts. Yet it was only with the advent of mass-produced artificial lighting in the early twentieth century that artists began using it as an artistic medium. These early experiments within Constructivism and the Bauhaus gave way to more intensive experimentation in the 1960s and 1970s, in which artificial light became a defining feature of Minimalism and Post-Minimalism. While Evans, Lislegaard and Staff are informed by these traditions, they create associations that extend beyond the strict seriality and phenomenology of minimalism. Their works explore the expressive potential of this medium.

Taking a cue from the strategies of the artists in this exhibition, *Grammars of Light* choreographs works in dialogue with the unique architecture of Astrup Fearnley Museet. Each installation is provided with a dedicated space, yet rather than isolating practices, works overlap each other, encouraging encounters between and among practices and ideas.



The exhibition begins with P. Staff's video *Penetration*, entangling light with the body politic, the built environment, and the medical field. Presented on a screen stretching from floor to ceiling, a medical laser is projected onto a shirtless figure's abdomen and into their viscera. At once visually daring, unsettling and erotic, the work externalizes the interior of this body, blurring the boundaries between interior and exterior. The light falls both onto and inside the figure.

Ann Lislegaard's *Crystal Worlds* (after J.G. Ballard), a digital animation that brings together science fiction and Brazilian modernist architecture, is presented on the museum's upper floor. In the work, British writer J.G. Ballard's *The Crystal World* meets the architecture of Lina Bo Bardi and Oscar Niemeyer. In Ballard's apocalyptic novel, the world is undergoing a process of crystallization—forests, people and villages are being turned into light—yet Lislegaard resists this spectacular image through measured pacing and a restrained, monochrome language. Instead, the shadowy world that she develops becomes a space to imagine other possibilities and trajectories.



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Cerith Wyn Evans' installation *StarStarStar/Steer* (*Transphoton*), newly adapted for this exhibition, is presented in Astrup Fearnley Museet's central gallery and mezzanine. Formed of six pillars of LED lights, echoing Doric columns, and dispersed throughout the space, the work pulsates at alternating intensities. It grows either more intense or dims according to a series of predetermined chance operations controlled by an algorithmic program, in a nod to the composer John Cage. Evans' luminous environment, visually captivating yet conceptually elusive, reorients the viewer away from the enclosure of their own experience into a dynamic process of encounter, as they move through and around the installation.

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Across their practices, the use of light in relation to space becomes an active medium—one that complicates our understanding of perception, and insists on the inseparability of sensory experience from the body. Attempts to describe encounters with these works are constantly in flux, as texts from science fiction, philosophy, and poetry, appearing as literal text and conceptual scaffolding, become estranged through translation and manipulation.

Grammars of Light is organized in parallel with Henie Onstad's exhibition *Ann Lislegaard* (January–April 19, 2026). A joint public program will provide visitors with an opportunity to engage with the artist's practice in depth across the two institutions.

Curated by **Owen Martin**.

Credits:

1. **Cerith Wyn Evans**, View of the exhibition Cerith Wyn Evans – *Forms in Space... through Light (in Time)*, MAAT, Lisbon, 2025, photo: Bruno Lopes, courtesy of EDP Foundation
2. **P. Staff**, *Hormonal Fog (Kunstverein)*, 2025, exhibition view Bonner Kunstverein, photo: Niklas Goldbach
3. **Ann Lislegaard**, *Crystal World (after J.G. Ballard)*, 2006, Stil
4. **P. Staff**, *Minimum World*, 2025, exhibition view Bonner Kunstverein, photo: Niklas Goldbach
5. **Ann Lislegaard**, *Crystal World (after J.G. Ballard)*, 2006, exhibition view 27a, Bienal de São Paulo
6. **Cerith Wyn Evans**, View of the exhibition Cerith Wyn Evans – *Forms in Space... through Light (in Time)*, MAAT, Lisbon, 2025, photo: Bruno Lopes, courtesy of EDP Foundation

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